

Bacton Primary School

Taylors Green, Bacton, Stowmarket, Suffolk IP14 4LL

Inspection dates

8–9 May 2019

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Despite improvements made over this academic year, standards at the school are not high enough. Too many pupils make less progress than they should.
- Too many leaders and teachers have expectations of what pupils can achieve that are too low. Teachers do not consistently challenge pupils sufficiently in lessons, so too many do not make the progress of which they are capable.
- Leaders do not check the quality of teaching with enough precision. As a result, weaker teaching limits pupils' progress.
- The curriculum is not ordered well enough to allow pupils to rehearse and consolidate their learning and make good progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) do not make consistently good progress.
- The teaching of reading and mathematics, though improving, is not consistently strong to enable pupils to make good progress.
- Teachers do not correct misconceptions so that pupils can learn from their mistakes and make good progress.
- Governors have not checked the effectiveness of the curriculum beyond English and mathematics. Therefore, they have not held leaders to account for important elements of the school's provision.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher models clearly the level of care she expects members of her community to show for each other. Following her lead, adults and pupils live up to the ethos of kindness that the headteacher has established.
- Teaching, learning and assessment in the early years are good and this leads to the children making good progress.
- Leaders and teachers from the trust have made positive contributions to the school's recent improvements.
- Pupils show pride in their school and enjoy taking positions of responsibility.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - leaders at all levels raising their expectations of teachers and pupils and ensuring that teachers have high expectations of all pupils
 - leaders designing a well-sequenced curriculum that enables pupils to make good progress across the range of subjects
 - leaders evaluating the quality of teaching, learning and assessment precisely so that they find and address less effective practices before pupils' progress is negatively affected
 - leaders ensuring that support for disadvantaged pupils helps them overcome any challenges they face so that they make good progress
 - governors checking standards across the whole curriculum and holding leaders to account for the quality of the entire provision.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, so that pupils make good progress and attain highly by:
 - teachers planning and delivering sequences of learning that meet the needs of all pupils and which build on what they have already learned
 - teachers raising their expectations of all pupils and giving them opportunities to grapple with challenging ideas and tasks
 - teachers providing consistently effective support for pupils with SEND so that they overcome their barriers to learning and make good progress.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Leaders do not have consistently high expectations of staff and pupils. Although leaders set admirably high expectations of how members of the school community should care for each other, expectations of academic achievement are not as high. As a result, relationships between leaders, staff and pupils are very strong. However, leaders' judgements of many aspects of the quality of the school's provision are overgenerous, allowing less effective teaching and provision to continue.
- Leaders' evaluations of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment are not sufficiently precise about what could be better. Consequently, leaders do not identify weak provision swiftly enough to make necessary changes before pupils' progress is negatively affected. For example, leaders have not checked the quality of spelling in key stage 2 well enough to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and pupils' outcomes in this key area of the curriculum.
- Leaders have designed a broad curriculum, but it is not sequenced well enough for pupils to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills leaders expect. This is because the curriculum does not provide pupils with the logical steps necessary to embed their learning. As a result, pupils forget key aspects of what they have learned and don't have enough opportunities to practise their skills over time.
- Leaders' use of pupil premium funding for disadvantaged pupils does not support these pupils consistently well. Although leaders' support does help these pupils have access to the wider curriculum through subsidised trips and clubs, it is not leading to these pupils making good progress.
- The provision for pupils with SEND does not help these pupils achieve as well as they should. Leaders do not ensure that teachers plan learning precisely enough to meet the needs of these pupils.
- Teachers value and benefit from the professional development that school and trust leaders provide. For example, recent training in new approaches to the teaching of mathematics has led to improved learning. The impact of this training, however, has not yet led to improvements consistently across the school.
- Leaders make effective use of the physical education (PE) and sport premium. As a result of the extra funding, most pupils take part in sports clubs and competitions. This is a substantial increase from Autumn 2018. Leaders have also used the extra funding to increase the variety of sports pupils can learn.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. Pupils are curious about the many beliefs and lifestyles in society and value their differences. Leaders provide pupils with many effective opportunities to learn fundamental British values such as democracy and tolerance. All pupils, for example, take part in the work of the student council, whether as members of the council or voters who actively take an interest in the council's work.
- School and trust leaders work well together. Trust leaders secure effective, specialist training for staff from a range of partner organisations. New ideas from trust schools have positively contributed to leaders' improvement plans.

Governance of the school

- Governance is effective.
- Governors aspire to reach the highest educational standards for pupils at the school. In partnership with the trust, they have set a clear vision for the school and have appointed enthusiastic leaders who are starting to make positive changes.
- Although the governing body tracks the progress of pupils in English and mathematics, they have not checked progress in any other subjects in the curriculum. Governors' records show, however, that they have directed leaders to resolve this with urgency by providing governors with the necessary information to hold leaders strictly to account.
- Recognising the need to improve progress for disadvantaged pupils, governors and trustees have commissioned a specialist expert to review how leaders use pupil premium funding.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are fit for purpose. School and trust leaders, governors and trustees have ensured that the school is a safe place for pupils and staff.
- All adults at the school place great importance on keeping children safe and are vigilant for signs that pupils may be at risk of harm. Adults act swiftly and appropriately when concerns arise.
- Leaders use the meticulously maintained records to track the actions of the many agencies with which they work. Leaders ensure that vulnerable pupils receive the support they need.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe and are taught how to stay safe when not at school. Nearly all parents and carers who responded to Ofsted's parent questionnaire, Parent View, agreed that their children feel safe at the school.
- Leaders carry out all the checks required to ensure that adults are suitable to work with pupils. The record of these checks is meticulously maintained and reviewed regularly by trust leaders, governors and trustees.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment, while improving, is not consistently good across both key stages. As a result, pupils make inconsistent progress from year to year and in different subjects.
- Teachers do not have consistently high enough expectations of their pupils. Too often teachers provide pupils with activities that are too easy and do not give pupils opportunities to grapple with difficult ideas and tasks. This is particularly noticeable in subjects other than English and mathematics. Similarly, teachers do not have high enough expectations of the way pupils present their work. Too many pupils' books show work that is untidy and not demonstrating appropriate handwriting.

- Teachers do not plan lessons that consistently enable pupils to build new learning on what they already know and can do. Pupils often learn new ideas well in lessons, but teachers do not link these effectively over time. This leads to pupils forgetting what they have learned and not making the progress they should.
- The teaching of reading is variable in quality. Teachers support pupils well to learn phonics and how to decode texts. Teachers do not, however, consistently support weaker readers with strategies to learn the phonics necessary to read at the expected standard. As a result, many weaker readers are not making the progress they should. For more advanced readers, teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to show what they know and can do. As a result, these pupils do not consistently make the progress they should.
- The teaching of mathematics is improving due to the new approach leaders introduced this year. The new approach, however, has not yet been incorporated in all classes. For example, teachers are starting to provide effective opportunities for pupils to reason and apply what they know about mathematics to real situations. This practice, however, is not consistent across the school. Teachers also do not consistently teach pupils strategies to solve difficult calculations, such as by using 'number bonds'.
- Teachers do not react swiftly enough when pupils misunderstand aspects of their learning. In writing, for example, teachers do not consistently correct pupils when they misspell words or use punctuation and grammar inaccurately. As a result, pupils do not develop what are often very sophisticated ideas with accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Teachers do not provide consistently well for pupils with SEND. Teachers' planning does not always match the needs of these pupils precisely. Consequently, these pupils do not consistently make good progress.
- Teachers, teaching assistants and pupils share strong relationships in lessons. Pupils value and benefit from the many opportunities for them to share their learning with what they refer to as 'talk partners'. Teachers effectively use 'talk partners' to teach pupils how to find errors and solutions to tricky problems in each other's work.
- The teaching of spoken language is strong across the school. When questioning pupils, teachers model spoken English very well and challenge pupils to use sophisticated language in response. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to rehearse their ideas before speaking so that they can express their thoughts with confidence and accuracy during class discussions.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are confident and curious. They maturely articulate how to be a successful learner and enjoy the many occasions teachers provide for them to discuss their learning with others.
- Leaders have designed many opportunities for pupils to take positions of responsibility and leadership. For example, they have created a very active school council that

positively contributes towards the strong ethos at the school. Most recently, they have worked with teachers and pupils to create a 'Student Charter' that outlines the school's expectations.

- Leaders and teachers provide very effective support for pupils' social, emotional and mental health (SEMH). As a result of leaders' and teachers' actions, pupils experiencing difficulties with SEMH quickly resolve their issues and develop strategies to maintain positive well-being.
- Pupils told inspectors that when friendships become tricky, teachers help them find solutions to rebuild positive relationships. Pupils also said that bullying is rare and dealt with well by teachers when it does occur. Every pupil who spoke with inspectors said that they could turn to a range of adults at the school to seek assistance when concerned about the actions of others.
- Teachers equip pupils well to stay safe at school and home. Pupils understand, for example, the risks that come with online activity and have strategies to stay safe.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Leaders and teachers have set high expectations of how pupils should behave in school and pupils live up to these expectations very well. Pupils are clear about what it means to be a responsible member of what they call 'a kind school'. For example, they take pride in their achievements and their school but when winning awards demonstrate how to be 'a kind winner'.
- In lessons, on the playground and when moving around the school, pupils behave very well. Teachers are quick to correct the rare incidents of unacceptable behaviour and pupils respond positively. Most parents reported on the parent questionnaire, Parent View, that the school makes sure its pupils are well behaved.
- Adult supervision during break and lunchtime creates a pleasant environment that is ordered and safe. Staff ensure that pupils' play is enriching, and they are skilful at helping pupils to manage any disagreements that arise during playtime.
- Pupils enjoy and value being at school. In 2018, the proportion of pupils who were absent was below the national average. The proportion of those persistently absent was also below the national average. Current absence figures show that absence continues to be low.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' attainment is better in key stage 1 than in key stage 2. In 2018, the proportion of pupils in key stage 1 who reached the expected standard was above national averages in writing and mathematics and in line with national averages in reading. By contrast, attainment in the same year for pupils in key stage 2 was well below average. Their progress in reading and mathematics was also well below average, though average in writing.

- Because teachers' expectations are not always as high as they should be, most-able pupils do not make consistently good progress. While the proportions of the most able in key stage 1 reaching the greater depth standards in reading, writing and mathematics are higher than national averages, this was not the case in key stage 2. Across the school, in subjects other than English and mathematics, most-able pupils do not make the progress they should.
- In 2018, the majority of pupils in Year 1 achieved the expected standard in phonics. For those who did not, teachers do not teach effective strategies so that these pupils can overcome their challenges. As a result, too many of these pupils continue to struggle with phonics.
- The progress of pupils with SEND is inconsistent. Because teachers do not plan support that is sufficiently targeted at their needs, many pupils with SEND do not make good progress from their individual starting points. Teachers have, however, been effective in supporting some pupils to overcome their barriers to learning, particularly those pupils with SEMH needs.
- Pupils' progress in subjects other than English and mathematics is too uneven. This is because leaders and teachers have not yet ordered the curriculum in a logical fashion. This means that teachers do not plan sequences of learning over time that help pupils make appropriate next steps in their learning.
- Disadvantaged pupils are making better progress than in the past but there are still too many who are not making the progress they should. Leaders' support has not yet enabled these pupils to overcome whatever challenges they face to ensure that they consistently reach the expected standards across the curriculum.

Early years provision

Good

- Staff create well-organised learning areas and good resources that provide children with many opportunities to develop skills and knowledge across all areas of learning. Using accurate assessment information, adults provide activities that are tailored to the interests and needs of the children. Consequently, children make good progress and are well prepared for the challenges of Year 1. In 2018, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development was in line with the national average. School assessment information shows equally strong outcomes continuing this year.
- Staff have made a stimulating learning environment where children enjoy learning and take great pride in their achievements. Children proudly dress as superheroes in recognition of their unique and substantial achievements. In line with the well-established positive ethos in Reception, children congratulate each other's accomplishments warmly and sincerely.
- Staff provide many opportunities for children to develop their use of language. All adults in the provision model sophisticated language and, as a result, children speak articulately. For those children who find learning speech and language difficult, teachers use external specialist support very well and this contributes to these children making strong progress. Children quickly become proficient in early phonics. Inspectors saw children writing sophisticated sentences using phonics confidently and accurately.

- Children quickly learn and live up to staff's high expectations for behaviour. When required to learn independently, children sustain their attention over long periods of time. Distractions are uncommon because children enjoy, value and focus on their learning.
- Parents are very positive about the partnerships staff build with them to support their children's learning. The transitions into Reception and then into Year 1 are very strong. Parents reported many times to inspectors that the work of staff has ensured that children settle well and start their learning quickly in both Reception and Year 1.
- Safeguarding is effective in the early years. Adults are well trained and use their training to look for potential signs of harm and follow up appropriately any concerns that arise. Children are well cared for and show that they feel safe.

School details

Unique reference number	143359
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10088715

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	158
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Mr Jeffrey Deane
Headteacher	Mrs Gayle Cook
Telephone number	01449 781 367
Website	www.bacton.suffolk.dbprimary.com
Email address	admin@bacton-pri.suffolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school joined the John Milton Academy Trust in September 2016.
- The multi-academy trust currently is governed by the board of trustees who delegate responsibilities for monitoring pupils' outcomes and progress towards targets, in line with their scheme of delegation as published on the trust's website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors met with the chief executive officer, headteacher, deputy headteacher, special educational needs coordinator (SENCo), members of the senior leadership team and subject leaders. They also held meetings with members of the governing body, some of whom are also trustees.
- Inspectors observed lessons and scrutinised pupils' books across the school.
- Inspectors spoke with parents at the beginning of the school day and analysed 39 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents.
- Inspectors spoke to teachers, support staff and pupils throughout the course of the inspection. They analysed five responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff.
- Inspectors took account of a wide range of information, including the school's website, development plan, assessment information about pupils' learning and leaders' monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment. Inspectors reviewed documentation relating to safeguarding, as well as minutes of the local governing body.

Inspection team

Al Mistrano, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sebastian Gasse

Ofsted Inspector

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